

I look forward to next week—since it seems we will be out of session now—ultimately addressing the concerns that women and families have across this country. We hear a lot about the protection of the unborn. Well, this is the very essence of being able to protect the unborn from an insidious disease that can affect their lives forever.

I hope the conscience of the Senate will ultimately move itself to its better judgment.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WRDA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time on the floor to first express my appreciation to the leadership for bringing forward the Water Resources Development Act. I know we are going to have a chance to vote on cloture on Monday, and I just want to thank the leadership for making the bill available for floor time.

I also congratulate Senator INHOFE, the chairman of our committee, and Senator BOXER, the ranking Democrat, because I am a proud member of the Environment and Public Works Committee that has recommended the Water Resources Development Act to the full Senate.

The process that was used by Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member BOXER is the way the legislative process should work in the U.S. Senate. We had a very open process, where many Members—all of the members of our committee and many other Members of the Senate—participated in one of the most important bills that we consider during the congressional session. It deals with the conservation and development of our water resources and authorizes the construction projects for the improvement of rivers and harbors. In other words, this bill very much affects every State in the Nation because it affects our economy, our environment, clean water, and public health. It is an extremely important piece of legislation.

When we look at the content of this bill, we see that the leaders of our committee were able to work out the right types of compromises so that we don't have a contentious bill before the U.S. Senate. We have a bill that is focused on the purposes of WRDA, to conserve and develop our water resources and to authorize the construction projects for our rivers and harbors.

For Maryland this bill is particularly important. When we look at the WRDA bill, so many projects and so many opportunities in my State are involved. In Maryland we have the Port of Balti-

more, which is the economic hub. I was there last week visiting the Port of Baltimore. I am there frequently. There are tens of thousands of jobs there. It is one of the most active ports in our country. It depends on the WRDA bill for the authorizations of the projects to keep the Port of Baltimore competitive and able to do the important economic work of our region. So for the economic impact that our ports have on America, and certainly the Port of Baltimore and Maryland, this bill is particularly important.

I make a point of being in Ocean City, MD, during the Association of County Conferences and had a chance to see firsthand the impact of these re-nourishing programs that are impacted by the WRDA bill. The protection of the Chesapeake Bay in my State, the largest estuary in our hemisphere, is very much impacted by this bill. The public health of the people of Maryland and indeed our Nation are very much impacted by the Water Resources Development Act.

So let me talk specifically about what is included in this bill that will help the people of Maryland and the people of our country. First, to the economic impact—as I said earlier, the passage of this bill will provide for job growth and economic growth in our country. It also will protect our public health. The dredging and maintenance of our rivers and harbors are paramount to this. As a result of the previous WRDA bills and continuing to this WRDA bill, we in our region are able to maintain our channels. We also have been able to find locations where we can put the dredge material.

For example, in Maryland we had a national model for what we did at Poplar Island. Poplar Island was a disappearing island in the Chesapeake Bay that was basically all submerged. It was an environmental negative. It was a liability. Through the use of deposits of dredge material, Poplar Island has been converted not just to a dredge site but an environmental restoration site and has helped very much in dealing with the diversity of species that we find in the Chesapeake Bay region. Through WRDA authorizations and appropriations, we have been able to convert a negative on our environment to a positive and at the same time find a way to use dredge materials to keep our harbors open. That is a win-win situation, and it is those types of projects that are included in the Water Resources Development Act.

But there are many other communities. In Maryland we have the Port of Baltimore—I talked about that—but we have a lot of smaller ports and harbors in Maryland. During the break I visited Salisbury, MD. They have a port. They want to expand their port so they can not only import products as they do, but use it as an export location. In Salisbury, they have Chesapeake Shipbuilding, which is one of the premier shipbuilding facilities we have,

and they benefit from what is done in Salisbury Harbor. By way of example, I want to point out to the people I represent in Maryland the important economic projects that are very much impacted by the passage of the Water Resources Development Act.

The economic impact goes beyond just what we do in our harbors; it also involves our shoreline protection. While I was in Ocean City, I visited with Mayor Meehan, the mayor of Ocean City, who pointed out to me what happened during the last storm. We get storms along the East Coast; we always get storms. But he pointed out to me the impact that the beach re-nourishment programs have had in minimizing damage to property and to the shoreline. We invest in beach re-nourishment as basically an insurance policy against damage that could be much greater. We could have our money back and much more through the investments we make in beach re-nourishment in the Water Resources Development Act. I can state that people who have their homes and businesses in Ocean City, MD, very much appreciate the fact that this Congress is paying attention to this issue.

Then I can go to Smith Island. Smith Island is the last habitable island in Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay. It is eroding, and it has serious issues about its sustainability. For the people who live on Smith Island, it is not only their homes but part of the history of our State and Nation that they are preserving. We have provided in the WRDA bill a way that we can do living shorelines so a community like Smith Island continues to be safe from the devastation we are seeing with erosion. I am proud of all those provisions that are in this WRDA bill that will help us deal with those issues.

As I pointed out earlier, the WRDA bill is important for our Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in our hemisphere. I talk about it frequently on the floor of the U.S. Senate. It has been declared by many presidents as a national treasure. It is a national treasure. We have a comprehensive program in partnership with the Federal Government and with the State governments of five States and the District of Columbia. We have a partnership with local governments, with the private sector, and we are making progress.

In this bill, to give one example, we increased the authorization for oyster recovery programs. I was proud to offer this amendment from \$60 million to \$100 million, almost doubling the dollars that are going to be available for oyster recovery programs. Why is that important? I think most Members understand that oysters are cash crops. It is nice to be able to harvest oysters and be able to serve them and to use them as watermen do. So we are increasing dramatically the number of oysters that can be harvested, using new methods, including ways in which we can seed oysters off the bottom, as

well as on the bottom of the river, and it is taking. We are seeing our oyster crops increase dramatically, which is helping the economy of the watermen of Maryland in our region.

Oysters are also a filtering agent for the Chesapeake Bay. They cleanse the water. They give us a better quality water in the Chesapeake Bay, which helps all species and the future of the Chesapeake Bay. We were down to a small percentage of the historic crop of oysters when we started the recovery program. Now that we have been in the recovery program, we are recovering a significant number of oysters. We are not there yet; we have got a lot more to do. But this extra Federal help in oyster recovery will certainly help in that regard.

Oysters also, by the way, build the infrastructure for the different species within the Bay. They actually become what the living organisms can live on and produce the type of food chain necessary for a healthy diversity within the Chesapeake Bay. So I was particularly pleased that the committee recommended my amendment to increase our programs for oyster recovery.

This bill also deals with clean water. In the 111th Congress, when I was chair of the Water Subcommittee of the Environment and Public Works Committee, I filed S. 1005, which deals with our State revolving funds. Let me explain for my colleagues—I think most know—that the State revolving funds are the major Federal partnership to help local governments deal with safe drinking water and clean water.

Wastewater treatment is done through State revolving funds. We have taken some actions in order to modernize this program. In this WRDA bill, we incorporate many of the elements of the legislation that I filed that will update and improve the revolving loan programs. It makes it much more predictable and flexible for our States, so they can plan their projects accordingly, which is critically important for safe drinking water and economic growth. We expand the eligibility to include preconstruction, to deal with replacement and rehab, and for the first time allow these funds to be used for source water protection plans so that we actually can make sure we are getting safe water into our water supply.

We also allow for the prioritization of sustainability, and we provide incentives for water efficiency that is cost saving and uses better technology, so that the way we handle our water can be done with less leakage, less waste, less energy, and more efficiency, which saves money.

There is \$900 million authorized for the Water Resources Research Act, and I was pleased to offer that to the committee, and I was pleased it was included in the final bill that is before the committee.

Let me talk for a moment about public health. The WRDA bill also deals with public health, which is very important. I know every Member is aware

of what happened in Flint, MI, on lead poisoning. We know how tragic that was. We know how many families and children were directly impacted by decisions that were made there. This bill does much to deal with the tragedies in Flint, but Flint is not unique in the risk factors to our children on the exposures to lead.

I can give Baltimore City as an example. The schools in Baltimore City have turned off their water fountains because it would not be safe for the children in schools to use the water fountains that are there. The pipes that lead into the schools are contaminated by lead. The city doesn't have the resources to replace those pipes that come in and therefore have closed the water fountains and use bottled water instead.

So we have problems in our water infrastructure in America as it relates to the vulnerability of exposure to excessive lead. I think the Presiding Officer is aware that there is no acceptable level of lead in a child's blood. We know that lead in the blood of children has an impact on their capacity to grow. I will give one example. Freddie Gray, who was tragically killed over a year ago in a police incident that caused a disturbance in Baltimore, had high levels of lead from his youth in his blood.

These are matters we could take steps to correct, and this WRDA bill does exactly that. First, it takes many of the provisions of the bill that I filed working with many of my colleagues. It called for true leadership. We put together many of our ideas on what we can do to combat lead poisoning. I put that bill together with my colleagues and filed that bill with Senator INHOFE and Senator BOXER's leadership. We were able to incorporate many of those provisions—most of those provisions into this WRDA bill that is now before the U.S. Senate so that we will be able to give public notice and transparency when public officials discover an unacceptably high level of lead in the water system. The public will know, and they can avoid the risks.

We are providing money for testing of schools, testing of childcare centers, and individual children. In Maryland every child between 1 and 2 years of age will be tested to see whether they have excessive lead levels in their blood. There is truly an all-out effort.

There is one provision I want to underscore. There is \$300 million in this bill so we can secure the last line of pipe coming from the main sources into homes. There are a lot of individuals, families, and low-income families who live in homes where the water system itself is safe but the pipes that lead into their home produce lead and subject their families to lead poisoning. They don't have the resources to correct it, and this bill provides a program where low-income families can get help in correcting the pipes that feed into their house to make sure they are lead-free so their children aren't susceptible to lead poisoning.

These are all good-news issues. I appreciate the time and attention given to this, but I wanted to emphasize that this bill is a very important bill. It contains issues, as I said, from protecting our environment to our public health, to our economy. It is a bill that deserves the strong support of the Members of the Senate. I hope my colleagues in the House will also approve this bill.

It reflects the hard work and leadership of Senator INHOFE and Senator BOXER and the Environment and Public Works Committee and many Members of the Senate. I am very proud to support this legislation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask to speak in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

HONORING CORPORAL BILL COOPER

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to honor the service and sacrifice of Corporal Bill Cooper of the Sebastian County Sheriff's Office. Corporal Cooper gave his life in the line of duty on August 10, 2016. As a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps who spent 15 years in the Sebastian County Sheriff's Office and 6 years with the Ft. Smith Police Department, Bill Cooper was a true public servant.

Corporal Cooper was remembered by his colleagues as a model law enforcement officer who did things the right way. He loved the men and women he worked with, and he exemplified what many in law enforcement aspire to, which was being an officer who never failed to show how much he cared about his community.

As such, he continued to serve long after he was eligible to retire. Cooper was also a devoted husband, father, and grandfather who loved his family very, very much. Last month, Corporal Cooper responded to a domestic call involving an armed suspect near Hackett, AR. The suspect opened fire on Cooper and Hackett police chief Darrell Spells.

Corporal Cooper was fatally wounded. Chief Spells and Greenwood K-9 officer Kina were injured. The suspect later surrendered and was taken into police custody. In a true testament to the impact that Corporal Cooper had on so many who served with him or knew him, he was laid to rest at a funeral service attended by several thousand people, including law enforcement officers from across the State and around the country. His colleagues and friends